

- 854 him into a more comfortable position. If he seems to be crying because he is sick, she tries to distract his attention by
- [524] crooning to him, rocking him gently, and patting him. One mother, by putting a stone in a tin can, had invented a rattle which she used in these circumstances. Each time a mother reacts to her child's crying by discovering and removing the source of discomfort, she rewards this response in her child. The situation in Kwoma is such that, for the young infant, crying is followed by the alleviation of pain more frequently than is any other response.

When the infant begins to talk, he learns an even more efficient technique for securing help. A mother does not always know the trouble when her infant cries, but his words elicit immediate and appropriate help. A Kwoma infant who has learned to speak may say, "Mother, my back itches," or [861] "I am cold; warm me." The mother rewards these demands by removing the source of discomfort. This indicates one of the advantages of learning language and hence why an infant is motivated to do so.

- 856 Thus during infancy the response to discomfort which is most strongly established is that of seeking help by crying or asking for it. Responses such as approaching the breast, moving to avoid pains, and other independent acts are also established. They form a basis for later learning, but hold a less important position in the response repertory of an infant than that of seeking help.

- 854 A motive which becomes strongly established during infancy is the wish to be near to and touch the mother. Almost all the pains and discomforts which an infant experiences are reduced while he is either sitting in his mother's lap or lying by her side. He is fed there, he sleeps there, and he is warmed and cooled, scratched and petted there—always while in bodily contact with his mother. The following case indicates the strong attachment that an infant has for his
- 854 mother's lap and how loath he is to leave it. Mbora one afternoon was teaching her infant son Suw to venture from her
- 866 lap. She was rolling a ball a little way from her and then

[p.38]

CHAPTER IV

CHILDHOOD

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WHEN the child¹ has relinquished his attempts to recapture the preferred habits of infancy, his mother gives him a little bag which she has netted for him and his father the betel-chewing accoutrements to go with it. They tell him that he has become a little man. He now turns to the play group and spends his time playing games with other children, roaming in the forest, and participating to some extent in adult activities. The sexes avoid each other from this time, the boys and the girls forming separate play groups.

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The widening of a boy's contact with the environment necessitates new discriminations about the edibility of things. While playing in the forest he comes across luscious-looking berries which may cause his death if he does not know that they are poisonous. Kwoma boys play a game in which they kill lizards and snakes and cook and eat them in a playhouse² in the jungle. Some of these reptiles are good to eat; others are poisonous. The parents warn the child about the objects that are poisonous. When I went for a walk with a native, he would frequently point out some class of objects to be avoided. Children were as likely to teach me as adults. Once a little girl of eight was scathing in her comments about me because I did not know that a certain berry was not good to eat. Although I observed no specific example of an older sibling using this technique on a younger one, I feel confident that it occurred rather frequently. In any case, the training

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¹ Mey, Fit, Kwo, Gwamp, Ham, and Hamh—boys, and Af, Buka, Haya, Toka, Kayamaka, and Yawa—girls, constituted the personnel of the childhood age group of Rumbina hamlet. Mey, Fit, Kwo, and Ham spent much of their time running in and out of my house and playing near by and therefore provided most of the observational data on the boys in this age group. Af and Buka, who lived in houses next to mine, provided most of the data on girls.

² A rough bough hut which children construct for play.

864 boys of this age even refrain from touching them while urinating.

I cannot say whether this prohibition also prevented private masturbation. I asked Ham, Fit, and Mey, all of them boys in the childhood group, whether they played with their penises when they were alone. All of them denied it with considerable embarrassment. They hung their heads, pretended not to understand me, and changed the subject as quickly as they could. This embarrassment suggests that they were guilty about masturbation, but it does not indicate whether they actually did not masturbate or whether they did and were afraid to admit the fact.

201 Boys who have not seen one another for some time rush
864 together, throw their arms around each other, and hug and
838 pat one another and rub one another's cheeks with their lime
[834] gourds. They exhibit this behavior with boys of their own
age and sometimes with older men, but never with a female.
Such an embrace is permitted between the sexes only when
they are both aged and related. Mey, Fit, and Ham frequently chose to sleep together in my house rather than at their homes. They were often joined by adolescents. Although this was attributed to the advantage of mosquito proofing, they usually slept huddled together and often with their arms around one another.

• 524 Kwoma boys frequently play a game with sexual connota-
838 tions: one boy chases another, throws him down, and simu-
864 lates copulation with him. Other boys in the group then take
advantage of the aggressor and pretend to copulate with him
until four or five boys line up in this way all laughing and
yelling with enjoyment. Then, when the bottom boy has
broken free and the chain disintegrates, there follows a hub-
bub in which each boy calls another his wife and claims to
have impregnated "her." Adolescents often join the game,
and, when they do, the children have great difficulty defend-
ing their "honor." When this game was the sad, one or an-
other group of boys played it almost every day for a period
of over a month.

838 Boys often tease one another sexually when they sleep
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Childhood

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together. In a manner similar to that associated with the "homosexual" game, each claims that the other is his wife and will have a child by him. On one occasion Ham slept in the mosquito net with Wysep, one of my houseboys, when the latter's wife was away. The next morning Gwiap and Mey began teasing Ham, saying that they suspected that Wysep had had sex relations with him and that pretty soon "his belly would swell up." Ham hotly denied the accusation, but the kidding persisted until Ham retired from the scene. 838 864

As far as I could observe, there was very little genital contact established either in the games or when the boys slept together. Sodomy is believed to be unnatural and revolting, and informants were unanimous in saying that anyone who would submit to it must be a "ghost" and not a man. Although this sanction theoretically applied only to the person who played the passive rôle, it seemed to be effective in restricting the practice. [524] •

The sexual training of a girl during childhood differs somewhat from that of a boy. Although she is punished for masturbating, in a manner similar to that of the boy, her conditioning differs in other respects, the most marked contrast resulting from the fact that the difference in her anatomy relieves her from the punishment which a male receives for having an erection in public. On the other hand, she is scolded by parents and older siblings for exposing herself unduly. She is taught to sit modestly with her legs stretched out together before her, and never to draw her legs up or sit with them apart. She is also warned not to lean over when a man is behind her unless she is wearing her net bag hanging down her back. Furthermore she is told that a modest girl should step aside from a path if she sees a man approaching and stand with her back to the path until he has passed. She should not address him until he has gone by, at which time she may speak to him over her shoulder. When a girl is immodest, however, she is punished much less severely than is a boy. She is rarely more than scolded for such a lapse. The girl is also treated more leniently than the boy in that she is not restricted from looking at the genitals of the other sex. 864

Childhood

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Older *brothers* scold younger *brothers* for showing a precocious knowledge of cult affairs, or for not heeding their warnings and younger *sisters* for annoying them or for not carrying out their household chores properly.

A boy is most frequently hurt by his older *brothers* in the course of games. The most popular sport consisted in kicking a pith ball up a slight slope against the side of a house and then, when it rolled down, kicking it back up again. In this, as well as in the dart-throwing and "homosexual" games, the older and bigger boys tease the younger one and knock him out of the way when he interferes. They order him to retrieve the ball or the pawpaw when it bounds into the bushes, or to throw the target rock for them. In the "homosexual" game it is the smaller boy who is usually at the bottom of the pile and who is called "wife" by the older boys.

A child becomes adept at avoiding punishment from older persons by obeying, escaping, lying, and being secretive. He learns that if he does not do what he is told, a blow will follow; that if he persists in doing what he is told not to do, he will be beaten. Thus he not only learns to obey commands, but also to anticipate the commands, that is, to follow custom. He also learns that, if he has disobeyed, he can often escape punishment by running away from the person who has issued the command, or by lying if someone accuses him of doing something wrong. Finally, he learns that he can do things of which the older people disapprove, if they do not observe him. He therefore learns to be secretive. Smoking in the bush house is one example. Masturbation may be another. A child also learns secretly to beat cult-gong rhythms, being careful that no older person is present when he practices. Kwoma parents do not punish a child for lying or being secretive; they only punish him if the misdemeanor is discovered. Children therefore become very adept in these arts of deception.

A child has his first success in social aggression toward his younger siblings. They, being smaller than he, are easily overcome when they threaten or interfere with him. When they get in his way in games, it is not difficult to shove them

123 had stolen some of Wof's tobacco that morning and he had scolded him for
593 this). "Stop wandering about the house, you little thief". Nam said
595 nothing but soon announced that he was going and asked me if I was coming too.

123 I left and went down to War's house. He was asleep in the porch on
[613] a sage slab with a head rest when I got there. His wife was sitting by
[252] the fire frying sage fritters. War got up slowly and greeted me, putting
his arm lightly across my shoulders. Then he brushed off the slab seat
(also a couch) for me, and we sat down on it. His wife greeted me warmly.
I asked about Kis and Kar; they were both still in the bush. A little
later Kis's no. 2 wife came in. She is a well-built woman of about 19.

[482] She was carrying a heavily laden net bag with coconuts, sugar cane, native
spinach and large leaves used to wrap boiled sage. She sat down on a box
[521] across the room from us and talked with War and his wife. The talk was
of daily happenings. I could not understand it very well, but there was
[522] an air of pleasantry and light laughter. Once she said something that
struck them all as amusing, and she thrust her hands down over her genitals
and rocked back and forth in glee. All the time they were talking, War
sat with his back to the women looking out of the house. He never looked
at her directly. She would look at me furtively every once in a while,
and if I caught her glance, she would giggle and look away quickly. (Nam and

[524] Bros had brought a ball with them. Once it rolled to where Sungay was now
sitting by the other fire frying sage fritters. I put my hand out for her
[52] to throw it back. She became very embarrassed, laughed foolishly, looked
away, threw it, and then covered her face with her hands, her breasts
[522] with her elbows and drew her legs up. War and his wife laughed heartily
at her embarrassment.

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It turned out later that it was Afi who urinated on the floor, and it was for this that Marok beat her. If a child wets his own bed or defecates in it, it is his own business. He must clean it up. Some disapproval is involved, but not beating or spanking.

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A whole gang of kids came up this afternoon. Some sat inside with me-- while others were out kicking a ball. One of them, Kamandu, has an abnormally long penis. Mse and a couple of kids inside began joking about it. Soon it had spread outside. Everyone was looking and laughing. He was not made fun of to his face, but he was perfectly aware of what was going on and soon retired from play with a sort of silly grin. This kidding suggested the homosexual game, and soon everybody was playing it. This causes great laughter to both participants and spectators. Tears come to their eyes, and they roll on the ground helplessly.

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Kar, Afok, Fokotey, Daw, Yataminj went to blow flutes. Mar and Mse decided not to go. They said they were afraid of poison. Mse offered the excuse to Kar that he had to go and wash sage, and Mar that he had to get firewood for me.

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The gong was finished, and they have been beating it ever since. It was heard and answered at Tangwishamp. It is not as good as they had hoped. They think the slit is too long in proportion to the size of the gong, but they think it may get better as it dries. For several days they will beat it: "Rumbina calling with a new gong--do you hear me?" and people at a distance who hear it will report, and its range will be established.

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This afternoon someone stole a half tin of my tobacco. I made a fuss about it, and my house boys blamed me for not kicking the boys out of the house. Mar said that the house was hereafter tabooed to all except the house boys and those who wanted to talk to me. They said I would have to

721 because he was afraid of sorcery. Kar came up later and asked me why I did not
 726 come down. I went, and there were about 50 people there. Most of them were or-
 [123] namented with black paint and mang (bird of paradise) feathers. They played ball
 [302] until dark and then left. I told Kar that I would not tell the police about the
 [301] raid, and he seemed upset and wanted to know who had told me about it. I
 [524] answered that I had overheard War at the house tamberan, so as not to get my
 [123] informers in trouble.

726 Mar and Mas told me that they were going to raid not Yelagu but Mugitama
 648 (Sowal Urambanj). The former place had representatives of the Australian gov-
 ernment, and they were afraid they would get in trouble with the police. Sowal
 Urambanj, however, was not yet under Australian control, and they could get
 away with it.

I asked them if they were going. Mar said "No, mi fraid long kiop mi no
 laik hang im up. Maski, mi stop alassim mari. Mi no man. Mi mari dasol. Mi
 stop mari olataim. Maski put im bilas bilong biruwa." (No, I'm afraid of the
 Australian patrol officer. I don't want to be hung. Never mind, I will be a
 woman the rest of my life. Never mind wearing the symbols of manhood.) He
 showed considerable affect during this speech as if he were making quite a
 sacrifice by deciding not to go. He and Mas both asked me to furnish alibis
 for them in case of trouble. Mar said that perhaps later they would go to
 Yelagu and clean it up, but that this was a different affair, War's idea,
 but that if this came to pass, he was going to tell the police because his
 garden would be useless.

726 They reported that now they were waiting for men from Urambanj, Tangwishamp,
 [501] Koriassi, and Yambou. War had made soup at his house. They were planning to go
 by canoe, to leave that night and skirt the Kwoma mountains. They would approach
 at night, single out one house tamberan and surround a house silently. At number
 one fowl (down), the leader would approach the house and break the fence (evidently
 the Sowal Urambanj's have palisades).

581 been married to a man from Tuk. She had been lazy, and he had namood (beaten) her, and she had left him. Her father had died, and Afok was looking out for her. She stopped there for a while and then said she wanted to marry Mar and promised Afok that she would not be lazy, so he had brought her to Mar. She had been with him a long time (3 years).

123 Kum was playing this afternoon with May and began tapping him on the
 524 leg. I told him to hit hard. He did. May slapped him back with a newspaper, then challenged him to hit him again. I told him to (also), but he raised his hand and only brought it half way down, not striking him. He repeated this a couple of times and then began to kick him. May paid no attention, and the play stopped.

124 I tried to get the real ages of Kwiyokai, Awa, Gwiyp, Mar, etc. They
 829 did not know except that Awa was older than Kwiyokai; Gwiyp was older than May. May says he was the same age as Kum is now at the time of the police raid which would make him 12 or 13, and Gwiyp 14 or 15. Mar says he was the same as May when Awa was born, but I doubt it. This would make him 22; I think he is nearer 18.

Revision

Gwiyp just went down and asked Yawa. She said that Kaiukai was older than he, that she was the same age as May who is also older than Gwiyp. This is surprising, for Gwiyp is not only larger but has a few sprouts of hair, whereas May has none. I asked them the reason for this, and they explained it was because May was afraid of scraping himself with nettles. I wonder if "Grilly" (Wof) has anything to do with it. Awa is the same age as Gwiyp, but is larger than he.

The situation at the time of the raid was this: May was 5, Gwiyp and Kamakan were 4--Mar and Fit were six. Therefore, their ages now are: Mey 14, Gwiyp 12, Mar 17, Mes is the same age as Mar.